

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 002933

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/25/12

TAGS: [PBTS](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [EPET](#) [NI](#) [CM](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: MOD DANJUMA DENIES PARIS AGREEMENT ON BAKASSI

Classified by Ambassador Howard F. Jeter; reasons 1.5 (B) and (D)

1. (C) SUMMARY: During an October 25 meeting with Ambassador Jeter, Nigerian Minister of Defense Lieutenant General (ret.) Theophilus Y. Danjuma discussed the GON's position on the ICJ's Bakassi decision. While Danjuma denied the GON had agreed to abide by the ICJ's ruling at the September 5 Paris meeting, he said Nigeria had no plans to take offensive action and was hopeful that a negotiated political settlement could be reached with Cameroon. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) During an October 25 conversation with Nigerian Minister of Defense Danjuma, Ambassador Jeter asked about the GON's "rejection" of the ICJ's ruling on the Bakassi. Ambassador said that we were somewhat taken aback by the declaration since the Nigerian and Cameroonian Heads of State had agreed at the September 5 bilateral meeting in Paris to abide by the ICJ judgement. Stating emphatically that he was present throughout the Presidential meeting, Danjuma denied President Obasanjo had promised to honor the ICJ's decision during the Paris talks with President Biya. Danjuma said the GON had authorized the UNSG to make a statement on the talks, but was unaware of the statement's content before it was released. Danjuma went on to explain that it would not have made sense for Nigeria to agree to abide by a ruling from which there was no appeal without having a clear idea of what that ruling would be. COMMENT: The GON line that Obasanjo never promised to abide by the ICJ ruling seems to be disingenuous if not duplicitous. That the GON did not seek to correct the UN's apparent misunderstanding of such an important issue is unexpected, to say the least. END COMMENT.

3. (C) When asked about Nigeria's plans, Danjuma said since the GON did not recognize the ICJ's ruling, Nigeria would not remove its soldiers, police or administrators from the Bakassi. Danjuma said the GON had no offensive designs against Cameroon, but would use force if its troops in the Bakassi were attacked. COMMENT: Although Danjuma may be correct in saying the GON is not planning to mount an offensive against Cameroon, there are signs of a military build-up which could mean that the Nigerians have not taken this unfortunate option completely off the table. END COMMENT.

4. (C) Explaining U.S. policy on the Bakassi, Ambassador urged Danjuma to find a political solution to the problem and to avoid, at all costs, any resort to the use of force. There were any number of modalities that could be conceived so that there are no real losers on Bakassi, including joint administration and resource sharing. Danjuma said that Abuja had always advocated a political settlement, but Yaounde had been recalcitrant and insisted that the issue be taken to the ICJ. Nevertheless, and in spite of the ICJ ruling, Nigeria remained hopeful that a political settlement could still be reached.

JETER